

*Keeping the Weapons* **LOADED**  
*Naval Special Warfare Support*

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# ALL HANDS

M A G A Z I N E   O F   T H E   U . S .   N A V Y

A U G U S T   2 0 0 4

THE

Green  
Warriors

NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE



[Number 1048]

**ALL HANDS**

# 32 Testing Newton's Law

# August

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### [On the Front Cover]

Members of SBT-22 in Stennis, Miss., are pulled back into a boat while practicing a hot extract.

Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

### [Next Month]

We head to Thailand for *Cobra Gold* 2004, and then look in on the Seabees in Croatia. We also visit the ex-USS *Shadwell* and discover some of the newest firefighting techniques in the Navy.

Until last year, the Army, in Yuma, Ariz., trained Navy Special Warfare teams to freefall. Today, the Navy has its own free-fall school, Strategic Air Operations, which allows more Sea, Air, Land (SEALs) and Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen (SWCC) to be free-fall qualified than ever before.

Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy



Photo by PH2 Eric S. Logsdon

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They call it the "E-ticket Ride:" a 33-foot Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB) vs. Mother Nature. Middle of the night, almost pitch black; a pair of RHIBs race through open waters of the Pacific Ocean. Forty knots in the blackness, wind ripping across the open craft—this is daily life for a Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewman (SWCC), and these guys wouldn't have it any other way.

Photo by PH2 Eric S. Logsdon



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Photo by PH3 Anthony Themistoclous



## 40 SEAL Support: The Team

Logistics Support Units (LOGSU), and LOGSU staff are the teammates SEALs can't leave home without. LOGSU's eight departments provide communicators, Seabees, engineers, parachute riggers, supply personnel, medical staff, divers and ordnancemen in support of SEAL Teams. Although they don't complete the arduous SEAL training courses, their support and expertise are critical to a successful mission.

AUGUST 2004 ALL HANDS



Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen spray a mock enemy area with a barrage of live gunfire from weapon stations aboard their combat patrol craft during a training exercise in the bayous of Stennis, Miss.

Photo by JO1 Robert Benson



U.S. Navy SEALs (Sea, Air, Land) assigned to SEAL Team 10 “Echo Platoon” conduct sustainment training while on deployment in Cartagena, Colombia. This training keeps the unit’s skills sharp and combat ready.

Photo by PH1(AW) Michael Pendergrass

# Speaking with Sailors

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy  
MCPON (SS/AW) Terry D. Scott

## These questions are from a recent All Hands Call

**Q.** My rating is not a source rating open to the SEAL community. Why isn't every rating a source rating to be a SEAL?

**A.** Let me dispel a big myth that perhaps many Sailors have. The SEAL community is actually open to every rating in the Navy. However, upon completion of Basic Underwater Demolition SEAL (BUDS) program, you have one year to convert into one of the source ratings to be competitive for advancement. The same also goes for other special warfare and special operations communities like Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), SEABEE Underwater Construction Technician, and Diver. A list of the ultimate source ratings for each program can be found in MILPERSMAN Article 1220-120. The source ratings that are listed were chosen because they most closely represent the different skill sets used within that community.

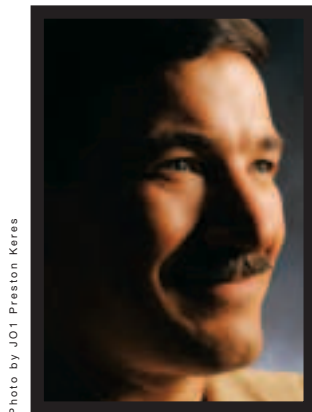


Photo by JO1 Preston Keres


*Speaking with Sailors* is a monthly column initiated by the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy as a way of reaching out to the men and women of the fleet, whether they are stationed just down the road or halfway around the world.

**Q.** Is field time with the Fleet Marine Force (FMF) in lieu of sea time viewed negatively on CPO selection boards?

**A.** No, not at all. I encourage you to find someone who has been on or been a part of a CPO selection board to really understand how much thought and discussion goes into each package. It's only one of many areas that are looked at, but as long as you are rotating to challenging commands at the right career progression for your rating, the selection board will have nothing but a positive view.

**Q.** Will not having a warfare pin hurt my chances for advancement?

**A.** What will hurt your chances is if you were to complete a tour onboard a command that allows the chance to earn a warfare device and you do not.

Many Sailors serve in ratings that are not as sea-intensive as others, or are assigned to commands that do not have warfare programs and therefore don't have the opportunity to earn a warfare pin. It's important to realize that warfare programs are intended to give us the tools needed to accomplish our mission. They are not meant to serve only as an individual reward. 

# ALL HANDS

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## Seven Carrier Strike Groups Underway for Exercise *Summer Pulse '04*

**D**OD announced that this summer, the simultaneous deployment of seven air-craft carrier strike groups (CSGs) will demonstrate the ability of the Navy to provide credible combat power across the globe by operating in five theaters with other U.S., allied and coalition military forces.

Exercise *Summer Pulse '04* will be the Navy's first exercise of its new operational construct, the Fleet Response Plan (FRP). FRP is about new ways of operating, training, manning and maintaining the fleet that results in increased force readiness and the ability to provide significant combat power to the President in response to a national emergency or crisis.

The exercise began in late June and will continue through August. This allows the Navy to exercise the full range of skills involved in simultaneously deploying and employing carrier strike groups around the world. *Summer Pulse '04* will include scheduled deployments, surge operations, joint and international exercises, other advanced training and port visits.

Under the FRP construct, the Navy can provide six CSGs in less than 30 days to support contingency operations around the



Photo by PH3 Sandra Howell

globe. Two more CSGs can be ready in three months to reinforce or rotate with initially responding forces, to continue presence operations in other parts of the world, or to support military action in another crisis.

*Summer Pulse '04* will exercise the logistics and shore infrastructure necessary to execute a large scale surge operation, stress the operational concepts in the Navy's Sea Power 21 strategy and improve Navy interoperability with numerous allies and coalition partners, as well as other U.S. military forces.

The seven aircraft carriers involved in *Summer Pulse '04* will include: the Norfolk-based USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) CSG and the San Diego-based USS *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) CSG,

**Sailors aboard the nuclear powered aircraft carrier** USS *Enterprise* (CVN 65) "man the rails" as the carrier approaches its pier at her homeport of Naval Station Norfolk, Va. The carrier and its strike group are returning after completing a six-month deployment in support of the global war of terrorism, including Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

both currently deployed, and Yokosuka, Japan-based USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63). The Mayport, Fla.-based USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) CSG will begin a combined and joint exercise early this month, followed by a scheduled overseas deployment.

The Norfolk-based USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) CSG will conduct a scheduled training exercise followed by overseas pulse operations with the Norfolk-based USS *Enterprise* (CVN 65) CSG, beginning early this month. USS *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) will conduct operations in the U.S.

Northern Command and U.S. Southern Command theaters during the ship's inter-fleet transfer from Norfolk, to its Pacific Fleet homeport of San Diego.

The near-simultaneous deployment of seven carrier strike groups provides the Navy and the joint combatant commanders an opportunity to exercise the FRP while maintaining the ability to respond to crises around the globe, enhance regional security and relationships, meet combatant commander requirements including forward presence and demonstrate a commitment to

allies and coalition partners. *Summer Pulse '04* is scheduled to conclude in August.

For more information on the *Summer Pulse '04* events and to schedule coverage opportunities, please contact Fleet Forces Command media office at (757) 836-3600.

For more news from the Department of Defense, go to [www.defenselink.mil](http://www.defenselink.mil).

*Story courtesy of the U.S. Department of Defense.*

### Navy Announces Continuation Pay for Full-Time Support Aviators

**A**viation Career Continuation Pay (ACCP) was approved in April for Full-time Support (FTS) pilots and naval flight officers. The pay, authorized for FY04, will be used for duty in department head, officer in charge and command billets.

Eligible officers may receive bonuses of \$15,000 based on designator and length of contract. "This program allows the Navy to retain top aviators, and keeps

with the force-shaping initiatives called for under the Chief of Naval Operations' (CNO) guidance," said CDR Paul Mattingly, FTS aviation placement officer at Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

FTS aviators make up about 5 percent of naval aviation.

Commanding officers must provide positive endorsement of all ACCP requests. Authorization for FTS ACCP is outlined in NAVADMIN Message 101/04. For details, eligibility, administrative procedures and application format, visit the FTS Aviation Detailer Web site at [www.persnet.navy.mil/pers4417/aviation.htm](http://www.persnet.navy.mil/pers4417/aviation.htm).

### Navy Ceremonial Honor Guard Participates in Ronald Reagan Funeral

**M**ore than 150 Sailors from the Navy Ceremonial Honor Guard participated in funeral ceremonies for former President Ronald Reagan's in Washington D.C., and Simi Valley, Calif., in June.

"It is a great honor to be a

part of his funeral," said Chief Machinist's Mate Alton Hainsworth, a member of the Ceremonial Guard who grew up during Reagan's presidency. "He was a great leader who helped our country."

Reagan died June 5 after a decade-long battle with Alzheimer's disease. He was 93.

Twenty-six members of the Ceremonial Honor Guard's "Hawk" team were flown to California to participate in the public viewing held at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley. Reagan's body was then flown to the U.S. capital by a special airlift mission on board a U.S. Air Force 747 aircraft for the first state funeral ceremony in Washington, D.C., since former President Lyndon B. Johnson's in 1973.

### U.S. Navy Sailors marched down Constitution Avenue,

Washington, D.C., during former President Ronald Reagan's state funeral. A horse-drawn caisson carried Reagan's flag-draped casket to the U.S. Capitol where he laid in state in the Capitol Rotunda. A state funeral was held June 11 Washington National Cathedral, where President Bush gave the eulogy.

## Shipmates

**LCDR Chris Cassidy, a Navy SEAL** assigned to a Virginia-based SEAL Team, was recently selected for NASA's Astronaut Program. Cassidy will join a group of pilots, engineers and educators as "The Next Generation of Explorers," NASA's 2004 Astronaut Candidate Class. He will begin training this summer as a mission specialist at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston.



The Honor Guard was well prepared thanks to something they are used to—rehearsals.

"Our guys knew what to do," said LT Andy Wattula, operation's officer for the Ceremonial Honor Guard, "because we've been practicing for state funerals for years."

Upon arrival at Andrews Air Force Base, the Guard's "Falcon" team transferred Reagan's casket to the waiting hearse.

Former First Lady Nancy Reagan, escorted by Maj. Gen. Galen B. Jackman, commanding general, U.S. Army Military District of Washington, D.C., solemnly watched the transfer as the Air Force Band played a subdued "Hail to the Chief."

The police-escorted motorcade delivered the casket to a horse-drawn U.S. Army caisson near the White House. The Guard's Team "Peacock," comprised of 99 Sailors, participated in Reagan's funeral procession from Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol's Rotunda.

Members of the Ceremonial Honor Guard continued to stand watch over Reagan's body until it was flown back to Simi Valley, Calif., for burial after the funeral ceremony at the National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.

A private burial ceremony for family and friends was held on



Photo by PH3 Todd Frantom

# Around the Fleet

the presidential library grounds. The Navy's Ceremonial Honor Guard also participated in the private funeral.

The Navy's Ceremonial Honor Guard is stationed in Washington, D.C. It is a two-year assignment for Sailors newly-graduated from the Navy's boot camp at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill.

"This is history," continued Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Maria Mancuso. "A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I'm so proud to say I was a part of it." **ES**

*Story by JO1(SCW/SS) James G. Pinsky and JO1(SW) Monica Darby on assignment with Navy News Service*

## New Command to Integrate Navy's ASW Mission

The establishment of the Fleet Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) Command marks the beginning of a new era in ASW readiness. Based in San Diego, Fleet ASW Command was officially established during an April 8 ceremony at the Fleet Anti-Submarine Warfare Training Center. RADM John J. Waickicz

was installed as its first commanding officer.

Historically, various communities within the Navy, such as surface ships, airplanes and submarines, have conducted their ASW training and operations independently of one another. Fleet ASW Command was established specifically to integrate these efforts under a single authority and make them more efficient.

The new command will be comprised of 138 military, civilian and contractor personnel. In addition to its San Diego headquarters, Fleet ASW Command will have detachments in Yokosuka, Japan, and Norfolk. Its primary focus will be on providing standardized ASW training for the entire Navy, assessing ASW capabilities and readiness throughout the fleet, and in seamlessly implementing the latest state-of-the-art technology into ASW operations.

During his remarks, guest speaker Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet ADM Walter F. Doran, emphasized the threat posed by quiet diesel-electric submarines which nations such as North Korea, China and Iran continue to acquire. Deployed in the open ocean and in coastal waters, these submarines have the

potential to make it difficult for the U.S. Navy to conduct at-sea operations, as well as for joint forces to move ashore from the sea.

Maintaining underwater supremacy through ASW effectiveness remains a critical core Navy mission.

By establishing the Fleet ASW Command, the Navy continues to demonstrate its commitment to maintaining a 21st century naval force that meets national security needs and retains its operational superiority at sea. **ES**

*Story by Eric Beheim, who is assigned to Naval Media Center, FSD San Diego.*

## Navy Cash Goes Live Aboard USS Ronald Reagan

Sailors aboard USS *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) recently received a new, first-rate service, when the Navy Cash Program went live, eliminating the necessity for paper money.

From vending machine purchases to Morale, Welfare and Recreation tickets, any cash purchase aboard ship will require

a Navy Cash Card. The card automates the financial process aboard the ship and frees departments that handle money so they can assist Sailors better.

"Not needing cash on board will make things easier and faster," said Airman Apprentice Wyatt Coppernoll. "All we have to do is swipe the card through a machine and we're done."

The Navy Cash Card does more than make purchases aboard the ship convenient. The card makes funds more secure because it requires a personal identification number (PIN). "Cards are PIN protected and will decrease theft on board," said Disbursing Clerk 2nd Class Willie J. Hogan of supply department. "It also gives you more control over your money."

The card is accepted wherever you see the MasterCard logo. The account is used as a debit card, so you can't spend money not in the account.

There are five cashless ATMs aboard located throughout the aft mess decks. Unlike a normal ATM, this ATM doesn't issue a receipt or dispense cash. Although the cashless ATM doesn't issue statements, you can access account information at [www.navycash.com](http://www.navycash.com). Up to 13 months of transactions may be viewed at the Web site.

"I love the new cards," said

AN Heather Beckham, a native of Phoenix. "I don't have to carry change around to get something out of the vending machine. I can just stick my card in, and I get the same service." **ES**

*Story by JO3 Shane Tuck, who is assigned to the public affairs office, USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76).*

## Sea Basing Key Element of Navy 2020

The Navy of 2020 will have unmanned underwater reconnaissance vehicles, according to VADM J. Cutler Dawson Jr., deputy chief of naval operations for resources, requirements and assessments.

"Our weapons systems and ability to communicate are far better than they've ever been," Dawson told attendees of the Annapolis Naval History Symposium at the U.S. Naval Academy.

The Navy of 2020 also will have "distributed systems that lay in parts of the ocean that can deny access to an enemy and rapidly kill him if he goes into those areas," said Dawson.

Sea basing has three critical elements: access, speed and reduced footprint, according to Dawson.

Dawson talked about the deployment of the U.S. 2nd Fleet flagship, USS *Mount Whitney* (LCC 20), that provided sea-based support to Marines in Djibouti at the Horn of Africa.

"Why did we do that?" he asked. "Because access was not assured, and even when we did have access, it was so immature that the investment to get ashore took time and money."

In planning the future force, the admiral said the Navy con-

siders five elements. "We look at the most likely combat operations and possible rules of engagement," said Dawson. "We look at bases and access, which have recently been greatly influenced by denial of access to Turkey. We look at potential systems, and we try to input the performance that we expect from those systems, and finally, we look at joint and coalition (operations)."

Planners also think about how many personnel—uniformed, civilians and contractors—will be needed in 2020, he said.

"We look at the development of personnel and ask, 'What will they need?'" he added.

For more DOD News, go to [www.defenselink.mil](http://www.defenselink.mil) **ES**

*Story by K.L. Vantran, who is assigned to American Forces Press Service, Alexandria, Va.*

## Troops to Teachers: Service After the Military

Representatives from the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program recently visited Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, to inform Sailors of a possible second career, "serving students."

Attendees were able to gain insight into the process of becoming a teacher, including certification requirements and job opportunities.

Sailors with a baccalaureate degree or higher are eligible to begin the teaching certification process to become an academic subject teacher. However, many Sailors may already qualify to become a vocational/technical teacher. Sailors only need the equivalent of one year of college courses and six years of experi-

# Time Capsule

This month we look back in the *All Hands* archive to see what was going on in the month of August. To view these issues in more detail on the Web, go to [www.news.navy.mil/allhands.asp?x=search](http://www.news.navy.mil/allhands.asp?x=search)

### 1959 – 45 Years Ago

A crew member from USS *Tutuila* (ARG 4) was featured on the cover of this issue of *All Hands* magazine. Inside, we featured an article about *Tutuila's* internal engine repair shop. Also featured was an overview of the Navy's "mighty midget" minesweepers and a visit to USS *Everglades* (AD 24).

### 1986 – 18 Years Ago

In this edition of *All Hands* magazine, we looked at what it takes to become a naval flight engineer. In honor of National POW-MIA Recognition Day, we gave an account of some of the first American POWs. We also paid a visit to the "Ageless Warrior," USS *Coral Sea* (CV 43), and Perth, Australia.

### 1992 – 12 Years Ago

The Navy said "No More" to sexual harassment. Inside we featured the Navy's plans to repair its image following the 1991 Tailhook scandal. We also featured professional athletes who got their start at the U.S.

Naval Academy. We said goodbye to Naval Facility Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, and said hello to Guam, as more than 1,200 Sailors and their families transferred to the island nation as a direct result of the Subic Bay closure.



## Ricky's Tour

By JO2 Mike Jones

[www.rickystour.com](http://www.rickystour.com)



## Around the Fleet

### Shipmates



**Aviation Structural Mechanic 3rd Class Brian Larson** was recently named Naval Base Coronado's 2003 Air Systems Program Blue Jacket of the Year. As an airframes technician, Larson personally contributed more than 100 hours toward an overall effort of 890 total hours in direct mission support of Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 31, China Lake, Calif. Larson was also requested by name to lead a project that successfully restored an AV-8A *Harrier* aircraft for the Colonel Leffler Memorial in San Diego.

### Naval Medicine Expands Malaria Vaccine Development Efforts

A team of Navy and civilian researchers recently formed a partnership to expand the Navy's malaria vaccine development program.

The Naval Medical Research Center (NMRC) and GenVec, a biopharmaceutical company, signed a two-year cooperative research agreement to develop and evaluate potential new vaccines. The Malaria Vaccine Initiative (MVI), part of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is providing major funding.

"This is a natural follow-on to our molecular vaccine development program," said Dr. Denise Doolan, head of the NMRC Malaria Program's pre-clinical research and development efforts. "This agreement represents a unique partnership of government, industry and the public sector."

"Malaria is a serious threat to troops stationed in endemic areas," said Doolan. "In all conflicts during the past century conducted in malaria-endemic areas, malaria has been the leading cause of casualties, exceeding enemy-inflicted casualties in its impact on person-days lost from duty."

"This was highlighted by the deployment of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit to Liberia last year where there were casualty

rates of 28 to 44 percent for troops with as little as 10 days of exposure to the malaria parasite," she added.

The effort brings together NMRC's expertise in malaria and vaccine development and GenVec's unique vaccine delivery system. Using a laboratory model, Navy researchers will test several vaccines that include a combination of specific proteins expressed in different stages of the malaria parasite's complex life cycle.

The parasite's genome contains more than 5,300 proteins," said Doolan. "We are looking at five of those proteins in this study. Three are expressed in the liver-stage of the parasite, and two others are expressed in the blood stage."

The goal of these multi-stage vaccines is to prevent infection or decrease the clinical symptoms of the disease. Success in this effort is expected to lead to future clinical studies in humans.

According to the World Health Organization, more than 1 million deaths from malaria occur worldwide each year, with 90 percent in Africa, south of the Sahara. An effective vaccine will be an essential element in the fight against malaria, since the parasite continues to develop resistance to anti-malarial drugs, and the mosquitoes develop resistance to insecticides. **ES**

*Story by Doris M. Ryan, who is assigned to the public affairs office, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Washington, D.C.*

certification while on active duty. Members may also be eligible for financial assistance for teacher certification expenses. A commitment to teach for three years in a "high-need" school district or at a high school with a high percentage of low-income families is part of the obligation for receiving some forms of financial aid.

There are 33 state TTT offices nationwide that offer placement assistance for the 45 states participating in the program. Offices can assist Sailors with state certification requirements.

"It's important to focus on where you want to teach, to start checking what your state's requirements are. Teacher certification is done state-to-state, not nationally. But some states will recognize another state's certification," said John Gantz, director

of the TTT program.

Sailors can consult their TTT representative on job availabilities, or check the Department of Education Web site at [www.teachers-teachers.com](http://www.teachers-teachers.com). The Web site lists teaching vacancies for each state.

Sailors interested in the TTT program can get more information from their state TTT office, stateside DSN 312-922-1241 or online at [www.ProudToServeAgain.com](http://www.ProudToServeAgain.com). **ES**

*Story by JO2 Lily Daniels, who is assigned to the public affairs office, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe.*

**Editor's Note:** It has been eight years since we highlighted the Naval Special Warfare (NSW) community. Much has changed during that time, and NSW members have been called upon more often for their special talents as our country's war on terrorism has progressed.

Because a key element of their strategy is surprise, we have taken care to maintain their stealth capabilities either by using profile images, deleting their names, using motion blur in the photographs or through the use of their own camouflage—face paint.

Those who are identified may be on instructor status or ready to leave the service. In each of these cases, identifying the individual will not compromise their safety or the integrity of future missions.

Through the centuries, each culture has had its own version of the "Shadow Warrior," without whose deeds, history might have been recorded differently. In our media-rich environment, a lack of coverage sometimes equates to a lack of credit.

It is our sincere hope that this issue helps tell the story of our Special Warriors—pays homage to their service and sacrifices—and at the same time, attracts our next generation of "Unseen Warriors" who wait to serve. **MGJ/JGS**

# HIS RECRUITER WARNED HIM IT WOULD BE TOUGH.



But, he's up to the challenge of being a...



... are you?



▼ **Huddled together** in a man-made lake, the few men who have made it to the last day of Hell Week await guidance from instructors on what comes next.

**SEAL training teaches candidates that most physical limitations are self-regulated**

Of all the battles a SEAL (Sea, Air, Land) must fight, none is more important than their first—the battle of mind over body.

*The voice was back. That small, self-doubting messenger returned to pitch its familiar monologue, “This is BS! Why are you putting yourself through this? You are never gonna make it all the way, so quit now and call it a day!”*

Basic Underwater Demolitions and SEAL (BUD/S) instructors know the human machine is capable of amazing endurance even in the harshest of conditions and environments, but they also know the mind must be made to ignore the pleading of the body.

As their name suggests, SEALs are trained to conduct operations in any arena, and successful candidates spend 18 to 24 months in training before being assigned to teams. Every step is a challenge, and each test is progressively more difficult. On average, 70 percent of candidates never make it past Phase One.

For most, the greatest challenge lies in Week 4 of Phase One. A grueling 5.5 days, the continuous training ultimately determines who has the ability and mindset to endure. “Welcome to Hell Week.”

Trainees are constantly in motion; constantly cold, hungry and wet. Mud is everywhere—it covers uniforms, hands and faces. Sand burns eyes and chafes raw skin. Medical personnel stand by for emergencies

# Mind Games

Story by JO1(SW) M.J. Darby

Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy



Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

and then monitor the exhausted trainees. Sleep is fleeting—a mere three to four hours granted near the conclusion of the week. The trainees consume up to 7,000 calories a day and still lose weight.

*The inner voice mimics the BUD/S instructor pacing the line of waterlogged men with his bullhorn. “If you quit now you could go get a room at one of those luxury hotels down the beach and do nothing but sleep for an entire day!”*

Throughout Hell Week, BUD/S instructors continually remind candidates that they can “Drop-On-Request” (DOR) any time they feel they can’t go on by simply ringing a shiny brass bell that hangs prominently within the camp for all to see.

“The belief that BUD/S is about physical strength is a common misconception. Actually, it’s 90 percent mental and 10 percent physical,” said a BUD/S instructor at the San Diego facility. “[Students] just decide that they are too cold, too sandy, too sore or too wet to go on. It’s their minds that give up on them, not their bodies.”

*“Whaddaya think? All you have to do is get up and go smack the hell out of that shiny, brass bell. You KNOW you want to. ...”*

It is not the physical trials of Hell Week that are difficult so much as its duration: a continual 132 hours of physical labor.

Through the long days and nights of Hell Week, candidates learn to rely on one

▼ **Minor foot injuries**, like blisters, abound during Hell Week. Here, a SEAL candidate takes some time while awaiting a hygiene inspection to treat a foot ailment. Hell Week is the fourth week of BUD/S training.



Photo by PH2 Eric S. Logsdon

Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy



▼ **The desert** around Niland, Calif., offers a huge amount of land where live-fire exercises can be performed day and night.



Photo by PH2 Eric S. Logsdon

◀ **A Navy SEAL** (SEa, Air, Land) instructor helps students from BUD/S Class 245 learn the importance of listening during a Hell Week surf drill evolution. The intense physical and mental conditioning it takes to become a SEAL begins at Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training.

▶ **By the final days** of Hell Week running no longer resembles running, it becomes more like an old man’s waddle. Stiff muscles and raw skin make basic movements extremely difficult.



Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

▲ **Surfing is what they call it.** Laying in the surf as the frigid water rolls over them. It’s used to keep the candidates cold and wet, and to weed out the people who don’t have the perseverance to continue.

another to keep awake and stay motivated. They tap one another on the shoulder or thigh periodically and wait for a reassuring pat in response that says, “I’m still hangin’ in there, how ‘bout you?” They cheer loudly when they notice a mate struggling to complete his mission and use the same as fuel when they themselves feel drained. They learn to silence that inner voice urging them to give in and ring that hideous, beautiful bell.

*Sleep. He would do anything for it. He couldn’t remember what day it was, or when he had last had sleep. But, he knew it felt good, and NOTHING about “Hell Week” felt good. He had been cold and wet for days. There were open sores along his inner thigh now from being constantly soaked. And every time he moved, the coarse, wet camouflage raked over the wounds, sending lightening bolts of pain through his body. Maybe the*

*voice was right. Maybe he should just get up, walk over, and ring that bell.*

The body often lies to the mind, and being susceptible to muscular exclamations of pain and exhaustion, the mind begins to believe in its fragility and give up. It is a fierce fight that many candidates never win, but for those who go on to become Navy SEALs, learning to push the boundaries of their physical limitations is the



Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

foundation for all subsequent training and operations.

For those who make it through the infamous 132-hours of Hell Week comes the inner knowledge that their bodies can go far beyond their previous expectations.

The concept of mind over matter is reflected in an oft-chanted phrase during Hell Week: “If you don’t mind, it don’t matter.”

Once Hell Week and Phase One of basic SEAL conditioning is finished, the candidates move on to new challenges, knowing they have it within themselves to stay the course.

But training is far from over. Before candidates earn the right to wear the coveted trident badges that identify them as members of the Naval Special Warfare community, they face training far beyond the fence lines of Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, Calif.

Underwater in San Diego for scuba and “drown-proofing;” in the mountains of Southern California for rappelling,

mountain climbing, explosives, small-unit movements and tactics; and San Clemente Island, Calif., where they take a final land-warfare exercise in a real-time environment.

This means graduation from BUD/S. After graduation, it’s on to Fort Benning, Ga., to learn the basics of static-line parachuting, followed by 15 weeks of SEAL Qualification training (SQT) before a final threeweeks of Extreme Cold-Weather Survival.

▲ **Just before the sun sets** a new crew of instructors come on the job with a level of intensity that keeps prospective SEALs in a state of constant exhaustion.

► **Facing the waves** ready to be marched back out into the surf students are ordered “About Face” they turn to see all their instructors, the commanding officer and the American flag. It takes a moment for them the realize they have made it through Hell Week.

## BUD/S:Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, Calif.



Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

### Physical Screening Test (1)

- 500-yard swim
- 42 push-ups
- 50 sit-ups
- Six pull-ups
- 1.5-mile run in combat boots.

### BUD/S Indoctrination Course (5 weeks)

Candidates learn what will be required of them and physically prepare for the challenges.

### Physical Screening Test (2)

- 50-meter swim
- Underwater knot-tying exam
- Drown-proofing exam
- Basic life-saving test
- Six-mile swim (with fins)
- Obstacle course
- Four-mile run.

### Phase One: Basic Conditioning (8 weeks)

#### Weeks 1-3

Builds endurance levels, and teaches small boat handling and basic seamanship. Candidates also learn basic maritime operations, conduct hydrographic surveys and prepare hydrographic charts.

#### Week 4 - Hell Week

##### Physical Screening Test (3)

- 2,000-meter pool swim (without fins)
- 1.5 mile night swim across the bay (with fins)
- Two-mile ocean swim (with fins)
- Four-mile run in combat boots
- Obstacle course.

#### Weeks 5-8

Conditioning continues. Candidates also learn basic maritime operations, conduct hydro-graphic surveys and prepare hydrographic charts.

### Phase Two: Diving Phase (8 weeks)

#### Physical Screening Test (4)

- Four-mile run (combat boots)
- Obstacle course
- Three ocean swims (with fins) 11 miles.

#### Weeks 1-8

Candidates learn combat swimmer skills and open- and closed-circuit diving techniques.

### Phase Three: Land Warfare (9 Weeks)

#### Weeks 1-6

Candidates learn land navigation, rappelling, mountain climbing, explosives and small unit movement and tactics.

#### Weeks 7-9

Combat skills learned in first weeks are applied in a field exercise on San Clemente Island, Calif. Graduation from BUD/S.

### Airborne School: Ft. Benning, Ga. (3 Weeks)

Basic (static line) parachute training.

### SQT -Advanced Training including: (15 Weeks)

- CQ Defense
- Combat Swimming
- Communications course
- Medical course
- Maritime Operations (MAROPS)
- Scout/Sniper/Photo Intelligence Capture Training.

### Cold Weather: Kodiak, Alaska Survival Training (3 weeks)

- Air drop into coastal waters
- Mountain trek
- Polar bear swim
- Snow survival
- Awarded Trident and NEC at Special Warfare Center, Coronado, Calif.



Photo by JO1(SW) M. J. Darby

◀ **In the final phase** of SEAL Qualifications Training, Extreme Cold-Weather Survival candidates are dropped into the icy, coastal waters off Kodiak, Alaska, where they stealthily make their way toward shore while carrying everything with them they will need to survive, maneuver and operate in near-Arctic environments.

“It was one of the roughest parts of training for me,” he said. “Even though we were issued cold-weather gear, nothing kept me warm. It was just above a freezing rain, really miserable weather and everyone was sick. But, I knew there was no way I was going to let it get to me after coming so far.”

Candidates must break through ice-encrusted waters, jump in without the protection of their dry-suit, tread water for three to four minutes, pull themselves out of the water, then dry their clothes and gear off.

While some might question the necessity of being inducted into this “Polar Bear Club,” SEAL candidates once again silence inner doubts and follow instructions as given. Even in the later phases of SQT,

Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy



candidates call upon their mental determination to pull them through.

“I kept thinking of that scene in the movie ‘Armageddon,’” said a fellow SEAL candidate and boatswain’s mate 3rd class. “The rescue team going to the asteroid asked about the environment in space and as NASA engineers described it, the heroes replied, ‘Worst possible environment imaginable, that’s all you had to tell us.’

▲ **During Hell Week**, a line that started with more than 100 people will drop to half that. The final number of graduates will be less than a third of those who began.

▼ **During the** Cumulative Skills Exercise for Extreme Cold-Weather Training, SEAL candidate teams had several objectives to accomplish and positions to reach to successfully pass the course. Here, one team huddles together for warmth and to cut down on the wind as they check coordinates for their next target.

▼ **After swimming to shore** with their gear, Extreme Cold-Weather Survival trainees change out of dry-suits and navigate their way through the surrounding woods of Kodiak, Alaska, as they make their way up to the snow-covered mountain range several miles inland.

The frigid, mountainous environment of Kodiak, Alaska, now is the final testing ground. Similar to the extreme conditions encountered in Afghanistan, candidates spend three weeks surviving these near-arctic

conditions. They plunge into the coastal waters from small boats. Bulky dry-suits shelter them from the chill of the water as they make their way to shore carrying everything they need to climb cliffs, traverse gorges, rappel mountain faces and sleep in the snow.

One of the first candidates to complete Cold-Weather Survival course as part of his SQT was an aircrew survival equipment man 3rd class.

Originally from Louisiana, the PR3 preferred the sultry heat of the South and had never been exposed to snow before. He dreaded the training that included submerging himself in ice water and spending several nights exposed to Kodiak’s extreme elements. During the experience, he found he and his teammates relied more on their perseverance than their equipment.



Photo by JO1(SW) M. J. Darby

Photo by JO1(SW) M. J. Darby



▼ **With the sun retreating rapidly,** SEAL team candidates fight against howling winds that cut across the mountain top as they make their way to the next destination point. Extreme Cold-Weather Survival in Kodiak, Alaska, is the final phase of SEAL Qualifications Training.



Photo by JO1(SW) M. J. Darby



Photo by JO1(SW) M. J. Darby

◀ **Due to their cumbersome** loads and the icy conditions, SEAL team candidates found their descent from the mountain range just as difficult as the ascent. During this final phase of SEAL Qualifications Training, candidates are taught how to use each piece of gear (such as skis and cramp-ons) until using it becomes second-nature, allowing them to fully focus on their mission.

That’s pretty much what Cold-Weather Training was like for me: worst possible environment imaginable.”  
After the completion of Cold-weather Survival Training, they are awarded their trident badge and Navy Enlisted

Classification code at Naval Special Warfare Center, Coronado, Calif.  
With terrorist threats on the rise around the world, SEALs are needed more than ever. Yet, even with a pressing need for more such men, training of candidates remains as tough as it has ever been.  
The 24-month training process will continue to separate the determined candidates from the undecided.  
As Navy SEALs put their lives on the line defending America, each member of that team must know without a doubt that

the man fighting next to him will not give in or punk out when things start to get rough.  
“NO! Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!” he silently screamed at the pessimistic voice as the sea came at him again. It worked! He focused once again on the other SEAL candidates linked arm-in-arm with him in the wet sand. He could hear their combined sputterings and groans. He also heard the crash of the surf, but the defeatist voice inside his head was gone—at least for the moment. Someone had to ring the bell before the group could crawl out of the icy water,

but it wasn’t going to be him, damn it! He gritted his chattering teeth, and prepared for the next wave. “After all,” he told himself sternly, “what’s a little water to a SEAL?”

**Darby is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.**

**Website Exclusive**

Find more photos online at [www.news.navy.mil/media/allhands/flash/ah200407/feature\\_2/](http://www.news.navy.mil/media/allhands/flash/ah200407/feature_2/) [will update link]

# The Go-Fast Teams

Story by JOC(SW) Robert Benson

Photo by JOC(SW) Robert Benson



They call it the “E-ticket Ride:” a 33-foot Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB) vs. Mother Nature. Middle of the night, almost pitch black; a pair of RHIBs race through open waters of the Pacific Ocean. The crew wears night vision gear, but still find it hard to see the waves. Each ocean swell—unpredicted—creates a ramp and sends the craft airborne for what seems like seconds at a time. And when they come down, they come down hard. The crew braces for shock, the boat shudders and a giant plume of boat wash is the only mark left in the faint moonlight as the boat races forward into harm’s way.

Forty knots in the blackness, wind ripping across the open craft—this is daily life for a Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewman (SWCC), (pronounced “swick”) and these guys wouldn’t have it any other way. “We judge boats by their speed and rounds per minute,” said Engineman 1st Class (SWCC) James Martino, a member of Special Boat Team (SBT) 12 in Coronado, Calif. He, like others at the command, wears a command T-shirt that reads “God, Country, and Fast Boats.”

Who are these guys—the ones who drive these camouflaged boats on the horizon? First guess for most would be Navy SEALs. But these Special Warfare operators are



Photo by PH2 Eric S. Logsdon

actually SWCC—aka the “boat guys.”

Some recognize the difference, like the editors at *Men’s Fitness* magazine. They recently did a cover story on “Military Fitness” and went to the Navy specifically seeking out a boat guy. They wanted someone from that unique community which is so unknown in the Navy, yet creates such a wake of attention when they are around. “We need someone tough!” the editors said. “We need someone fit, aggressive, a warfighter and someone who can dead lift 450 pounds without thinking twice.”

The guy they put on their cover, now appearing on newsstands, is Sonar Technician (Surface) 3rd Class (SWCC) Peter Hamilton. Somehow those civilian editors knew that SWCC had something special—a no-fear attitude, aggressiveness, and the intelligence and skills to conduct covert operations in littoral regions of the world.

SWCC teams conduct unconventional special operations. To be exact: they drive

go-fast speedboats down narrow, winding rivers or open ocean, transporting SEALs to and from hostile situations and operating nearly every weapon with a trigger the military has to offer.

And they do things that would make James Bond tremble at the knees. When a call comes, a boat team can form up, put a 33-foot RHIB in the back of a C-17, fly half-way around the world to a hot zone, push the boat out of the plane into the ocean and then jump in after it, wearing parachutes, over enemy territory, with little or no notice.

They use craft like the Mark FIVE (MK V), the RHIB and the Special Operations Craft-Riverine (SOC-R). Way beyond any putt-putt fishing boat you may have seen growing up, these boats move, as noted in *Jane’s Fighting Ships*—“MISSION: High speed, medium range, all weather insertion/extraction of Special Operations Forces, maritime interdiction operations, tactical swimmer operations, intelligence collection,

▲ **A wall of spray** is thrown as a SWCC boat moves at top speed around a 90 degree corner in a small, shallow waterway in Mississippi.

operation deception, coastal patrol, and more.”

What *Jane’s* doesn’t describe is the fact that the crew routinely takes bone-jarring wave shocks of 10-15 g’s with peaks of 20 g’s. The pounding of the sea is so severe that seats are equipped with million-dollar shock absorbing technology that mitigates the rough ride.

“Once, we were in 15- to 20-foot swells, recalled Quartermaster 1st Class (SWCC, PJ) Christopher Moore, from SBT-12. “Our

boat, a 24-ft. RHIB, could barely make it up the swells before the engine would sound like it was going to die. Then we would get to the top and become a 24-ft. surfboard coming down the other side. We couldn’t even keep in visual contact with our other craft.

“After getting beat up in conditions like this for 10 hours, the only thing you want to do is get off the boat—but you can’t because your knees are locked up, your

hands are frozen to the helm and your back feels like you just got out of the ring with Mike Tyson,” said Moore.

“Then you go out the next night and do it again,” he added.

Boat guys do more than just go fast. SWCC missions include unconventional warfare, direct action, combating terrorism, special reconnaissance, foreign internal defense, information warfare, security assistance, counter-drug operations,

personnel recovery and hydrographic reconnaissance. SWCC numbers hover around 600 personnel—less than 1 percent of the U.S. Navy, but they offer big dividends on a small investment. The SWCC units’ proven ability to operate across the spectrum of conflict and in operations other than war in a controlled manner, and their ability to provide real-time intelligence and eyes on target offers decision makers a lot of options.

► **One member of Special Boat Team (SBT)22** lays down cover fire with a minigun during a practice narrow river beach extraction.



Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy



Photo by JOC(SW) Robert Benson

◀ **During Drills in Southern California,** BM2(SWCC) Casey Cobb swims from one RHIB to another as EN2(SWCC) Henry Griffin acts as a lookout.

Three SWCC communities exist; the West Coast SWCC units are based in Coronado (SBT-12) and operate RHIBs and MK Vs. The same inventory is located at the East Coast SWCC (SBT-20) in Little Creek, Va. And down south, in Stennis, Miss., SBT-22 operates the SOC-R craft.

But to get to one of these units, you must attend SWCC basic school: a physically grueling indoctrination into the ways of Naval Special Warfare, portions of which are combined with SEAL basic training. After this 10-week “weed out the weak” phase, a required Crewman Qualification Training (CQT) course is taken. After CQT, a Sailor earns the SWCC pin: a unique insignia that is worn with your regular Navy uniform and that identifies these professionals’ important place in Naval Special Warfare.

“You will run, swim and do more push

ups and sit-ups than you ever thought your body could do,” said Moore. “SWCC school is extremely tough. You have never been challenged like this before in your life. It’s very demanding physically and mentally, and it’s designed to get rid of weak individuals who aren’t focused and driven. If you have any questions in your head about being there you will be packing your bags for a new career.”

Moore also noted that the attrition rate is high—about one-third make it through.

“When it’s 3 a.m., and you’re getting yelled at, doing a lot of push-ups, sit-ups and getting wet and sandy in the cold water of San Diego, many Sailors ask themselves, ‘Why am I doing this?’ If the answer to the question is, ‘I don’t know,’ you’ll quit. For those few guys who don’t ask themselves that question, or come up with an answer that motivates them, they will move to the

next evolution.”

After SWCC school, graduating students arrive at a Special Boat Team where they begin an 18-month pre-deployment training cycle starting with Professional Development (PRODEV), Core Training and Squadron Interoperability Training (SIT).

“You need to be hard to make it as a SWCC,” said Master Chief Damage Controlman (SWCC) Patrick Battles, who went through the school at the age of 37. “The attrition rate in my class was high,” he said. “We started with 47 and ended up with 16.” Battles added that those who are strong swimmers have an advantage. He agreed with Moore that the traits required to be successful as a SWCC are being razor sharp—physically and mentally—which is required due to the extremely dangerous nature of their work.

“You have to be intelligent, good-hearted

► **Obscured by rotor wash** from an SH-60 helicopter, a pair of RHIBs cruise through Pacific waters near San Diego.

▼ **The hull design of Team 22 riverine boats** enables them to turn extremely tight channel corners and stop on a dime without flooding the craft. Crewmen must be able to not only hold on but also fire weapons under these violent conditions.



Photo by JOC(SW) Robert Benson

▼ **In Pacific waters off San Diego**, an MK V (SOC) takes on some small swells. The medium-range, all-weather craft is manned by a crew of five and designed primarily to insert and extract special operations forces.

Photo by JOC(SW) Robert Benson



Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy



Photo by JOC(SW) Robert Benson

▲ **Largely hidden** by four-foot surf near the beach, the crew of an 11-meter RHIB from SBT-12 negotiates the shallow waters of Coronado beach.

▼ **Running a suped-up** modified cigarette boat at full speed through narrow river channels is a skill few possess. Team 22 in Stennis, Miss., specializes in it, and they are the ones called on to deploy with SEALs in this type of environment.



Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

and physically and mentally tough,” said Moore. “It takes a unique person to do our job—one who can adapt to new surroundings quickly and efficiently.”

Heavy weapons knowledge is also a tool of the trade. And Battles, like other SWCCs, have it. In “war speak” understood by a select few, he said his “preferred weapons posture is to mount a .50 caliber MSHB machine gun with PEQ TWO lasers forward on both RHIBs. We also have a .50 caliber machine gun aft, and sometimes a MK-19 Mod 3 40 mm Grenade Machine gun.”

According to Battles, “It’s pretty exciting to launch 40 mm high explosive dual purpose grenades and fire .50 caliber armor piercing incendiary tracer rounds.”

Indeed.

SWCC personnel embrace a philosophy of dominance through superior firepower. As a petty officer in charge of a small force of riverine specialists at Special Boat Unit 22, Gunner’s Mate 2nd Class (SWCC) Thomas Wiggins knows this well.

During a typical SEAL extraction, Wiggins and his crew, along with three other Special Operations Craft, rush into an extraction point at up to 30 knots in a hailstorm of protective fire from a trio of M-60 machine guns aft, and a thundering .50 caliber machine gun at the bow.

To see this sight is awesome, but only if you’re on the shooting end. Spent rounds bounce off the metal deck, tracers pierce the darkness, dense foliage is shredded with a barrage of cover fire, ears ring, and the thumping .50 caliber drumbeat massages insides, as dominating, incessant firepower is laid toward the enemy. SEALs board the craft, a speedy exit is made and the fire continues until they are out of sight.

An extraction of this sort is measured not in minutes but in seconds.

While these combatant crewmen specialize in scaring the enemy with dominating, ear-crushing, non-stop firepower, they also have the ability to be invisible, entering the bad guy’s backyard undetected.

Such was the situation in Iraq, when MK V Detachments combined with RHIB crews in the dead of night and silently inserted two SEAL platoons onto oil platforms off

the coast of Iraq at the onset of conflict.

This insertion assured that the platforms, named Mina Al Bakr Offshore Terminal and Khawr Al Amaya Offshore Terminal, weren’t set ablaze during ensuing hostilities.

“We took both platforms down simultaneously in the middle of the night,” said Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class (SWCC) Gary Luna, who was the MK V boat captain on the mission. “We inserted the platoons silently with the RHIBs. They were totally overwhelmed.”

The crew that night all wore night vision devices, and the MK Vs had a nifty toy called Maritime Forward Looking Infrared or MARFLIR—a thermal imaging device which lets wearers see up to two miles out on the horizon, day or night. This capability,

along with the boat’s incredible acceleration, stop-on-a-dime handling and maneuverability give them the advantage on the water. Insert a crew of five SWCC Sailors and some firepower, and the enemy’s got quite a problem.

“There is always something new and exciting going on at work and in the world. Nothing about SWCC is boring or redundant,” said Moore. “When something happens in the world, we get to be there to help take care of things and do what we have trained so hard to do so well.

“Being a SWCC is personally satisfying,” added Moore. “I am very proud to be part

of a small, elite team, and push 110 percent all the time. Every day brings change and a new challenge.”

*Benson is a photojournalist and the public affairs officer for Naval Special Warfare Group 3, San Diego.*

*For more information on the SWCC program, visit [www.swcc.navy.mil](http://www.swcc.navy.mil)*

#### Website Exclusive

Find more photos online at [www.news.navy.mil/media/allhands/flash/ah200407/feature\\_2/](http://www.news.navy.mil/media/allhands/flash/ah200407/feature_2/) [\[will update link\]](#)

▼ **U.S. Naval Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen (SWCC)**  
man .50 caliber machine guns on their Mark V Special Operations Craft while patrolling the waterways of Southern Iraq.



Photo by PH1(SW) Arlo Abrahamson

# Testing Newton's Law

The Navy's New Free-fall School

Story and photos by PH1 Shane T. McCoy



▲ Waiting for his next dive, this student takes a moment to think about what he needs to do in the air.



At 2 a.m., 35,000 feet above the earth, a U.S. Navy Special Warfare (NSW) team pours out of an aircraft into the icy night. At this altitude, no one on the ground is aware that a small team of men and their equipment are falling through the darkness at more than 120 mph.

The team doesn't feel the cold or notice their air comes from oxygen tanks. Their minds are on the basics—turn right, check altimeter, turn left, check altimeter, track toward the rest of the team. Freefall is short when the earth is rising to meet you.

After falling 30,000 feet, ripcords are pulled and a quick rush of air is heard as canopies deploy—then silence.

In scant moonlight the men maneuver into formation and steer into the wind for a landing. Fifty feet above the earth, they let their packs dangle below their feet. As

the pack hits the ground, each man is cued to flare his parachute to land as softly as possible in the dark. The team, yards apart, quickly pulls in their chutes and digs shallow holes in which to bury their chutes and oxygen tanks.

Only a handful of people in the world possess the skills needed to pull off a mission like this, and even fewer can teach these skills.

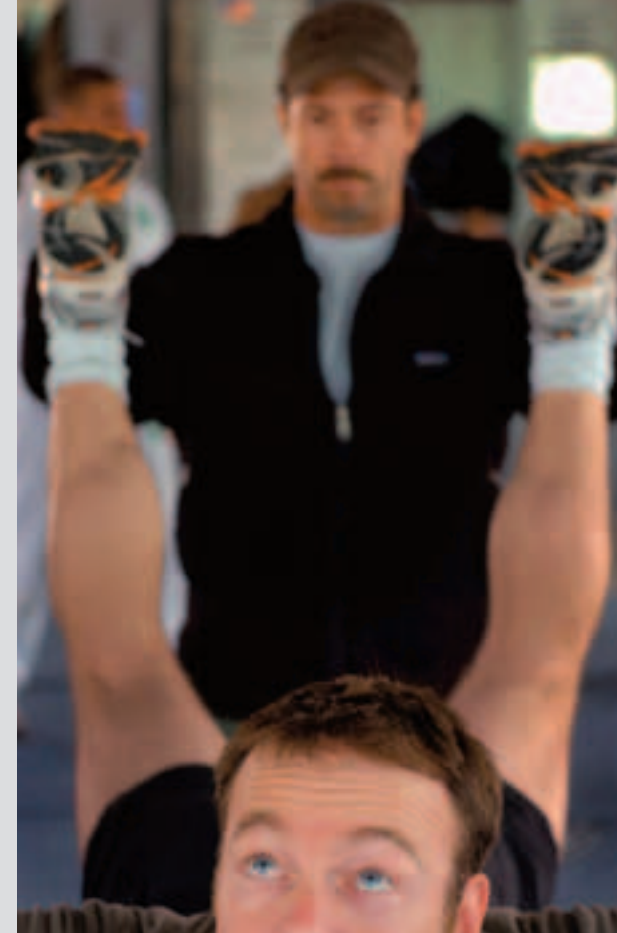
Until last year, the Army, in Yuma, Ariz., trained Navy Special War teams to freefall. Today, the Navy has its own free-fall school, Strategic Air Operations (SAO),

which allows more Sea, Air, Land (SEALs) and Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen (SWCC) to free-fall qualify than ever before.

"At one time in a given platoon, out of 15 guys, you might have had two to four free-fall qualified," said Master Chief Boatswain's Mate (SEAL) Lu Lastra, the school's senior enlisted advisor. "The number of billets we were getting at the jump school in Yuma were just not enough to satisfy our current mission requirements for the SEAL teams. We plan on getting 100 percent

◀ **You hear the planes** long before you can see them in the bright California sky. Once the plane is spotted, picking out a tiny free-faller is even more difficult.

▼ **Prior to a jump**, the instructors have students go over each movement they will perform in the air.



▲ **When falling**, positive pressure must be kept on the legs at all times. While practicing turns, instructors hold the feet of students to make sure they are exerting enough pressure the entire time.



◀ **A student uses the door** to the training area to practice body placement when leaving the plane.

of our SEALs qualified."

This is no small task. NSW is one of the few sectors of the Navy currently increasing its numbers. More than half of the active SEAL platoons are forward deployed now, the most since the Vietnam War.

"The great part about this course is the

instructors. They have been around these students, the industry and drop zones for years," Lastra added. "Their ability to train and conduct accelerated free-fall (AFF) with these students is incredible."

The instructors are one of the most unique parts of training at SAO, as most

are civilians. The instructors teaching the course are professional skydivers with thousands of jumps each. Some are national champions, and others are former Special Forces members from the United States and abroad.

SAO conducts two phases of training in



▲ A photo of the drop zone is on the roof of the jump planes, to point out where the jump will be made based on winds.



◀◀ **Students pack their own chutes** after every jump. They are closely watched and assisted by professional riggers.

◀ **Instructor Marc Volpe** provides some last minute instructions to his team before the next jump test.

▼ **You can always find** a student somewhere practicing a good arch.

the desert just outside of San Diego. The static line school teaches the basics of jumping and landing. SAO condenses the Army's 21-day course into four days. "We teach it in less time, because we [only] teach static-line parachuting," said Alan Fink, owner of SAO. "We also don't get into the physical fitness programs here, because the students have already done it."

Static line school is the prerequisite to free-fall. When making a static line jump, the student's ripcord is pulled by a line attached to the parachute upon exiting the aircraft. According to Fink, "If a person is not able to make the static line jumps, there is no room for them in the more intense free-fall school."

Upon progressing to free-fall school, students enter a whole new world. "It feels more like flying than falling," claimed one

of the students.

"During static line school, time outside of the plane is spent under the canopy, steering toward the landing zone," said Fink. "In free fall if your knees bend too much, you are flying backward, too straight and you're flying away from your team."

"It's very fast paced," said a member of SEAL Team 8. "The first jump, I was so focused on procedures I didn't see or hear anything. Each jump after that as my circle of awareness expanded, I was able to see more as things slowed down."

The key, say instructors, is for the student to look where they want to go before they start to turn, focus on their goal, relax and be sure to arch. After a jump, many of the students could not recall what had happened other than, "Something went wrong." This is where new technology helps out.





Every instructor skydives with a digital video camera mounted on his helmet to record each jump. Following the jump, a student reviews the video to see exactly what was right and wrong. “I didn’t know what my legs were doing,” claimed a student. “Later, I saw them all over the place in the video; I had been focusing on my upper body.”

After seeing their mistakes, students have a chance to correct them before being tested. Every student has three chances to pass each phase of the school. If they can’t

◀ **Body placement is the key** to a good exit from the plane. Instructors not only don’t teach this move, they’re not sure how he got his legs spread that far.

▼ **Strategic Air Operations** maintains equipment for 50 students. Students each have a number on their chute; the number determines which jump they will be on.

get it right by the third try, they are dropped and may repeat the course again.

“I failed the course the first time I went through because of bad exits during our rucksack (ruck) test,” said a member of Special Boat Team 20. “Luckily, I was able to get back here again and this time I passed, because I was more relaxed.”

Jumping with a ruck attached is just the beginning of the special instruction military free-fall school teaches. Next, the students jump with ruck and weapons. Then, with ruck, weapons and oxygen, and finally at night with all of their equipment.

“To go from zero jumps to jumping at night with all that equipment, and landing in a group in 21 jumps, that takes some doing and is unheard of in the civilian world,” said Andy Peckett, head instructor and a former member of the British military. “But this program is working here. The proof is in the puddin.”

Although SAO is tough and demands much of its students, the students enjoy every minute of it.

“It’s a rush,” said one of the Special Boat Team members. “100 percent pure adrenaline.”

The instructors at SAO agree. For them, the best way to return to earth is surrounded by air not metal. When they hear a person claim they could never jump from a “perfectly good airplane” they simply reply, “Ah, that’s where you’re wrong. There is no such thing ...” ✎

*McCoy is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.*

#### Website Exclusive

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▲ **Strategic Air Operations** uses civilian planes that are able to take off and land on a small runway. While the planes hold fewer jumpers than a C-130, they can make more runs, are quicker and are owned by the school.



▲ **In heavy winds** it is important to get the canopy in quickly before you are dragged.

▲▲ **Each instructor (blue and gold chute)** is assigned five students. The chutes of each team are color-coded so instructors can easily find their group in the air.

▼ **GM3 Andre Matsevil** reassembles a weapon. LOGSU ordnance personnel know just as much about the weapons as SEALs so if there is a problem, they can repair or replace it.



Story and photos by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous

# SEAL SUPPORT:



▲ **SK2 Freddick Brown** searches for a specific uniform item in the warehouse where supply carries more than 1,000 different line items. The total inventory value is well over \$10 million.

# THE TEAM



## TO BE SUCCESSFUL,

a SEAL must bring

his entire focus to the mission before him. He thinks.

He moves. His equipment responds. When free-falling

from 15,000 feet, he doesn't have time think about

who packed his parachute. When underwater, he

can't wonder if his equipment will allow him to

breathe or not. While he concentrates on the mission,

a separate team of mission specialists has his back.

For Naval Special Warfare (NSW) Groups in the Little

Creek, Va., area, those specialists are called Logistics

Support Units (LOGSU). LOGSU staff are the team-

mates SEALs can't leave home without.

LOGSU's eight departments provide communicators, Seabees, engineers, parachute riggers, supply personnel, medical staff, divers and ordnancemen in support of SEAL Teams 2, 4, 8 and 10—the Navy's Special Warfare East Coast teams. LOGSU San Diego supports SEAL teams 1, 3, 5 and 7. Although they don't complete the arduous SEAL training courses, their support and expertise are critical to a successful mission.

LOGSU's Seabees make sure SEALs have a place to stay in the field. Thanks to the transportation and construction capabilities of the Seabee teams, mobile quarters offer SPECWAR teams the flexibility to take their stealth and their talents to any of the world's environments.

Not only do the Seabees build a camp, they also climate control it—a seeming luxury—but a necessary environment for the technical communication aspect of a field tactical center the teams pack with them. A second benefit this environment

◀ **LOGSY provides the SEALs** with their essential gear. Here, approximately 160 static-line parachutes are packed just for one SEAL team.

▶ **PR1(AW) Brian Munos** rigs a free-fall parachute and ensures that it's packed correctly. "It's important to have the gear they might need ready, fully capable and fully loaded out for them to do whatever they have to do," said Munos.

offers is the ability to recuperate and re-supply if the mission requires it. A protected environment close to the mission area and a hot meal prepared by a culinary specialist mean a SEAL can be sharper, stay longer and be more effective.

"We make sure that we have planning facilities, and that they can go in and take the time to plan their missions, and get out there and complete them," said Chief Storekeeper (SW) James Patterson. "And gym facilities. Those guys need to continue with their physical fitness when they are out there for a long period of time—like two or three months. We feel that we are really impacting their mission by providing them the best facilities possible."

Operating in hostile, unfamiliar terrain, often under cover of darkness, a SEAL team relies on its ability to communicate quickly. Their mobile communication detachment is there to make sure that happens. A SEAL team is blind without good "comms," and whether securing a remote communications station or rescuing a downed pilot, they rely heavily on a wide array of radios, satellite links and computers to keep them connected with each other and the outside world.

"If you can't communicate, you can't operate," said Electronics Technician 2nd Class (SW) Michael Shaw.

Shaw, who served previously on carrier duty, said the demands of a SEAL team means he has to be the expert in his field.





▲ **GM2(DV) Sam Burgette and HT1(DV) Michael Bailey** prepare all of the diving equipment for a SEAL platoon. “We take care of anything to do with diving for all the SEAL teams on the East Coast,” said Bailey.

► **EN2 Bernard Smith** tests boat engines by running them for at least six hours in the water.

“To work alone at LOGSU as a communicator, you have to pull from within yourself and meet the needs of your platoon,” said Shaw. “Unlike in the carrier, where it’s more of a team effort, you are pretty much alone or with one other person. A lot of times, there aren’t two people. It’s just you, and you are solely responsible for that platoon. You have to know your material before you go out the door.”

For SEALs, air operations adds the “air” capability to their Sea, Air, Land name, Air ops makes sure SEALs can have absolute faith in their parachute. Aircrew Survival Equipmentman 1st Class (AW/FPG) Brian Munos and the other nine parachute riggers who work with him understand the importance of their job. The lives of their teammates are literally in their hands as they pack chutes.

“All the riggers here know our role is

crucial,” said Munos. “The SEALs have a job to do, and that is to accomplish any mission placed in front of them. It’s important to have the gear they might need ready, fully capable and fully loaded out for them to do whatever they have to do.”

Like the air operations team, the underwater diving department shares similar responsibilities for life support equipment—just in a different environment.

Supporting six platoons—each platoon loaded with 18 sets of diving rigs, dive team members have their work cut out for them. The equipment includes sets of scuba gear with high-pressure compressors, oxygen-charging stations and low-pressure compressors for running oxygen-charging pumps. That the complex equipment has to work in extreme conditions and “under pressure” describes not only the submerged environment for the SEALs and the



equipment, but also the need for the support techs to flawlessly prep, maintain and repair this equipment.

“We take care of anything to do with diving for all the SEAL teams,” said Hull Maintenance Technician 1st Class (DV) Michael Bailey, the diving department leading petty officer.

Like every other LOGSU support

department, Bailey and his team are responsible for packing all the gear the SEALs need. More than 100 pallets of gear are deployed with a single team.

While radios, weapons, diving equipment and their parachutes are packed and checked by their respective support departments, a SEAL team’s bag can’t be packed without the coordination of the supply department.

“Without the supply department, the ship doesn’t get under way, especially for NSW. We are the essential issue point for all their gear,” explained LT Frank Johnson, the LOGSU stores officer.

Johnson and his supply staff run the warehouse, purchase gear and keep tabs on more than 1,000 line items as they are received and issued to the SEAL teams, LOGSU and

SPECWAR detachments overseas.

Although the supply department still performs the regular supply duties of furnishing pens and staples for administration, Johnson said a key part of his team’s duties have to do with uniform issue. As might be guessed, uniform requirements for these warriors are somewhat more specialized than those Sailors who receive a



▲ **IT1(SW) D'Juna Hoffman** provides tactical communications support to the SEAL teams.

standard sea bag. Consider ship-boarding gear, winter warfare gear, mountaineering gear and numerous others. Johnson said all those items are specially purchased and secured before being issued to SEAL operators.

The specialized nature of equipping the SEAL Teams' warriors makes supply duties a challenge, according to Storekeeper 2nd Class Freddick Brown.

"The hardest thing about my job is

dealing with all the different equipment we have," said Brown. "Depending on where these guys have to go and what their mission is, they need a lot of things, and it is my job to make sure that they have everything they need."

If there's an ongoing theme between the LOGSU departments, it is customer service. The engineering staff feels a keen customer service responsibility. Ordinarily, a shop that is responsible for small craft maintenance and repair wouldn't deal much with customer service. Their focus would be on the equipment and how to troubleshoot and

repair boats or engines. With the SEAL team, however, these techs feel much closer to their customers.

"I know that every time they go out, they are carrying my boat with them," said Machinist's Mate 1st Class (AW) Joseph Moore, "and I do my job to fix the boats so they can go out and do their jobs."

It's engineering's job to make sure all the boats and their engines stay in working order. With an inventory of about 200 of each type of engine, they are constantly in a test and repair mode, verifying that each unit works before it goes back to the field.

Once the engines are returned to the SEALs, the teams themselves care for and maintain them. For serious problems, the teams will send the engines back to engineering for repair.

When it comes to weapons, the ordnance specialists do business the same way. "Once the weapons are issued, it becomes the SEALs' responsibility to take care of them," said Gunner's Mate 1st Class Demp Harper. "They are as thoroughly trained on those weapons as we are, so they know how to take care of them. They will come to us when they need to, and if we can't fix the



▲ **HM2 Anderson Strickland**, a physical therapy technician, helps an injured SEAL so he can rejoin his team in the field as soon as possible. Strickland sees about 30 patients a day.

problem, we will simply replace the weapon and send the other one out."

Even after SEALs receive everything they need to accomplish a mission, they depend on medical personnel to stay operational. Even though a SEAL corpsman deploys with every squadron, LOGSU's medical department provides additional support, such as rehabilitation clinics for any injured SEALs.

"[Knowing] that our population is considerably healthier, we can rehab them a lot quicker," said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Anderson Strickland, LOGSU's physical therapy technician. Strickland, who sees about 30 patients a day, also said that SEALs are more motivated to get better and get back out there, and that motivation helps his patients complete the rehabilitation process.

In the end, LOGSU doesn't work for the SEALs; they work with them. They share a common attitude of being ready to do whatever it takes to accomplish the mission. The SEAL depends on his training and equipment to complete the mission and to come home alive. SEALs know and appreciate what the men and women at LOGSU

do to ensure they get the best tools possible to get the job done.

"I didn't think of them much before I came here," said Harper, who recalled working with SEALs during a tour aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75).

"We had some SEALs that came on, and they would disappear, and we just knew they were taking care of business, so I always thought they were outstanding—the best part of the Navy."

Harper now has a deeper insight into what being a member of the Special Warfare community means.

"Now I see exactly how much sacrifice they have to make," he said, "because they come back from deployment and have to go right back out. I think they are even more outstanding and sacrificial than any other aspect of the Navy. They don't get to spend much time with their families. And they're all volunteers, so basically they put the Navy first all the time." ■

*Themistocleous is a photojournalist who is assigned to All Hands.*

# Focus on Service

Fame can be a funny thing. Some people relish in it; some people struggle with it. And some others, like Navy Special Warfare Sailors, would rather not deal with it at all.

As part of the Navy's elite combat team, SEAL and SWCC members are used to both receiving and deflecting attention. Collectively, SEAL and SWCC teams represent the most famous unit in the Navy, a group immortalized time-and-time again in movies, books and, most recently, video games.

In recent years, ex-SEALs like "Survivor" contestant Rudy Boesch, pro wrestler-politician Jesse Ventura and author Richard Marcinko have become household names, reminding people about their service along the way.

But even with all that exposure, Special Warfare is largely a gathering of unknowns—nameless, faceless Sailors performing any number of unspecified, treacherous jobs around the world.

Right now, they may be storming a beach somewhere in the eastern world. They could be jostling into position to invade an


enemy compound deep within a South American jungle. They could be everywhere, working to defeat enemies under a blanket of mystery.

But no matter the situation, people should not waste their time trying to read about their operations in the morning paper—a write-up about it will not be there.

Secrecy is a virtue in the Special Warfare community. They cling to it and defend it as if their life depended on it. And many times it does.

So Americans shouldn't expect to see their SEALs and SWCC members in a television interview hyping their role in a top-secret mission. They won't be heard on the radio, either.

Chances are, they will never be heard. For them, it's all part of being part of Special Warfare.

Fame has never been so enigmatic. 

*Ludwig is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.*

# The Navy's Secret Service

Story by JO2 Charles L. Ludwig, photo by JO1 Monica Darby

# Eye on the Fleet

**Eye on the Fleet** is a monthly photo feature sponsored by the Chief of Information Navy Visual News Service. We are looking for **high impact**, quality photography from **Sailors** in the fleet to showcase the American Sailor in **action**.

## REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

► San Diego-based U.S. Navy Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen (SWCC) and SEALs (Sea, Air and Land) train members of the Philippine Armed Forces (AFP) aboard a rigid hull inflatable boat off the coast of Zamboanga.

Photo by PH2 Andrew Meyers



## EASTERN AFGHANISTAN

▼ A Navy SEAL (Sea, Air and Land) observes munitions being destroyed. The SEALs discovered the munitions while conducting a Sensitive Site Exploitation (SSE) mission in Eastern Afghanistan.

Photo by PH1 Tim Turner



## CENTRAL COMMAND AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

▲ A member of a Naval Special Warfare team conducts a simulated medical evaluation procedure using a horse collar device from an SH-60 *Seahawk* helicopter. The procedure enables injured Naval Special Warfare team members to be transported to medical facilities in a timely matter.

Photo by H1 Arlo K. Abrahamson



## USA

◀ The guided-missile cruise USS *Lake Erie* (CG 70) makes her way down the Willamette River enroute to Portland, Ore., for the 97th Annual Rose Festival.

Photo by PH1 Michael Larson

## GUAM

▼ During certification training, members of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 5 and Naval Special Warfare Unit (NSWU) 1 perform a freefall jump from a U.S. Air Force C-130 over Andersen Air Force Base, Yigo, Guam.

Photo by PH2 Marjorie McNamee



**To be considered**, forward your **high resolution (5"x 7" at 300 dpi) images** with full credit and cutline information, including **full name, rank and duty station**. Name all identifiable people within the photo and include important information about what is happening, where the photo was taken and the date. Commands with digital photo capability can send attached .jpg files to: [navyvisualnews@navy.mil](mailto:navyvisualnews@navy.mil)

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# Eye on the Fleet

## IRAQ

► A U.S. Naval Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewman (SWCC) sits beside his .50 caliber machine gun mounted on the back of a Special Operations Craft - Riverine as it transits through Iraq's southern waterways.

Photo by PH1 Arlo Abrahamson



## CENTRAL COMMAND AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

◀ Naval Special Warfare team members conduct a fast rope insertion training exercise from an HH-60H *Seahawk* helicopter.

Photo by PH1 Arlo Abrahamson



## IRAQ

◀ Naval Special Warfare team members conduct a training operation.

Photo by PH1 Arlo Abrahamson



## COLOMBIA

◀ U.S. Navy SEALs conduct sustainment training while deployed to Colombia. This training keeps the unit's skills sharp and combat ready in the event they are called upon for tactical support.

Photo by PH1(AW) Michael Pendergrass



## AFGHANISTAN

► Naval Special Warfare team members conduct operations 24/7

U.S. Navy Photo



# Eye on History

**Eye on History** is a monthly photo feature sponsored by the Naval Historical Center.

For more photos pertaining to naval history, go to [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil).



**1962 ▶**

President John F. Kennedy inspects members of the newly- formed SEAL Team 2 at NAB, Little Creek, Va. Navy Frogman BM1 Louis Kucnski (right) wears an MK V Semi-Closed Circuit Underwater Breathing Apparatus.



**1945 ▲**

An underwater demolition team member aboard USS Schmitt (APD 76) prepares demolition charges for the invasion of Borneo.



**Viet Nam ▲**

Members of a U.S. Navy SEAL Team deployed to the Republic of Viet Nam relax after a tough day in the field.



**◀ 1943**

Office of Strategic Services Maritime Unit (OSS-MU) operator wearing the Lambertsen Amphibious Respiratory Unit (LARU) during training. OSS-MU men were the nation's first combat swimmers. Navy Underwater Demolition Team adopted their diving tactics and equipment during the post-war period.

**Mid-to-late 1950s ▶**

Underwater Demolition Team members, diving Draeger Lt LungII, used a closed-circuit, pure oxygen rebreather in the '50s.



*U.S. Navy Photos Courtesy of the Naval Historical Center*

# Go Ahead, Make My Career

Story by J02 Charles L. Ludwig

After some careful consideration, I have decided it's time to pursue an alternate form of employment. For me, writing is no longer enough.

It's not that I detest my current job as an *All Hands* photojournalist and commentary writer. I'm actually quite happy in my work. But while I was reading through the stories that ran in this month's magazine, a revelation smacked me dead in the face.

I want to be a SEAL. I *need* to be a SEAL.

Why, you ask? Between the chance to blow up stuff underwater, jump out of airplanes and work with the most technologically advanced weaponry in the world today, SEALs undoubtedly have the most exhilarating job this side of Evel Knievel. That's why we're all reading this issue.

The job comes with some serious perks, too. Besides the routine respect and admiration SEALs receive, I would get to wear a snazzy warfare device known the world over. I'd receive extra pay and benefits, along with the chance of working alongside Charlie Sheen (Oh, wait. I'm being told that's just a movie).

Well, either way I'm ready. Bring it on.

Despite my enthusiasm, I have encountered a few roadblocks along my new career path.

First is my athletic ability or lack thereof, not to mention the doughy ball around my middle. Apparently, the SEALs look down on that kind of thing. (Who knew?) Exercise is always an option, but have you seen the kind of stuff those guys do to stay in shape? I have.

On the few occasions we had a SEAL aboard USS *Nassau* (LHA 4), the gym would fill up with guys wanting to see what a real workout looked like. It looks like this: weightlifting, running, more weightlifting, sit-ups, running, maybe some more weightlifting. We thought it would never end.

Well, I can't do that. Maybe they have some kind of workout that involves staring at a computer monitor and clicking a mouse. That's a little more up my alley.

Jumping out of airplanes could also be a problem at times. I can easily jump when the plane is motionless and on the ground. From what I hear, though, the SEALs enjoy leaping out when the plane is *thousands* of feet up.

That kind of free-fall takes some guts; something my doughy section seems to lack.

Well, I can still try to dive, right? No, not really. For me, sinking to the bottom and never coming up is a distinct possibility. That trait doesn't mesh with the kind of long-distance underwater dives a SEAL excels in.

So, to sum it up: Intense exercise? Not for me. Jumping out of planes? Not a chance. Deep sea diving? In the words of the immortal American icon, Tony Soprano, "fuhgettaboutit."

Now that I've looked at it scientifically, I can honestly say, "What the heck am I thinking?" SEALs? I would be a horrible SEAL. Everyone knows that.

But in boot camp, everyone wanted to be a SEAL. I did, and you probably did, too. As I traveled down my own Navy path though, I realized it takes a

special breed to be a SEAL. For that, a guy must possess a passionate resolve to fight for his country and a focused determination that won't allow him to quit, even in the absolute worst of situations.

I'm not that type. Most people aren't. But, luckily for the rest of us, the Navy has managed to find a few.

So I'm going to leave the special warfare to the most special of Sailors. But in the meantime, I'll work on creating my own snazzy warfare pin. ✎

*Ludwig is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.*



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